water contained in the air is very considerable, so that were all that is dissolved in it precipitated, there would probably be enough to cover the earth's entire surface, not only to the height of thirty-two feet, *i. e.* the height of a column of water equiponderant to a column of the atmosphere, (as some have supposed) but to an indefinite height. The supposition that thirty-two feet was the limited height, was founded on the hypothesis, that the pressure of the air was intimately connected with the quantity of water contained in it: but daily observations show that this opinion is unfounded. During a long summer's drought there is a continued absorption of water into the air; therefore, on this hypothesis, the barometer should be continually rising; but, on the contrary, it is found to be stationary during the whole time, at thirty inches, or a little more: and, what is still more extraordinary, when the drought is about to have an end, while the air yet contains the whole quantity of water it had absorbed, and has not parted with a single drop, it becomes suddenly lighter, and the mercury will sink perhaps an inch. And after the atmosphere has been discharging for a number of days a fluid eight hundred times heavier than itself, instead of being lightened by the discharge, it becomes heavier, and even specifically heavier than it was before. From these remarks, and from the large quantities of water proved to exist at the greatest depths below the surface, it is evident, that the system of nature contained ample materials for effecting the universal deluge. And if (as many have with great probability maintained) the atmosphere owes its solvent power, or a great share of it, to electricity, a conjecture, perhaps not unreasonable, may be formed, of the manner in which the deluge was produced. We are assured by undeniable observations, that electricity is able to swell up the water on the surface of the earth; the agitation of the sea in earthquakes is a proof of this; for, at the same time, there is a discharge of a vast quantity of electric matter into the air, and as soon as this happens, all becomes quiet on the surface of the earth. From a multitude of observations it appears also, that there is at all times a passage of electric matter from the atmosphere into the earth, and vice versa from the earth into the atmosphere. There is no absurdity in supposing that the Deity influenced the action of the natural powers, in such a manner, that for forty days and nights, the electric matter contained in the atmosphere should descend into the bowels of the earth; the consequence would be, 'the breaking up of the fountains of the deep, and opening the windows of heaven.' The water contained in the atmosphere being left without support, would descend in impetuous rains, while the waters of the ocean, those from which the fountains originate, and those contained in the solid earth itself, would rise from the very centre, and meet the waters which descended from above. Thus the breaking up of the fountains of the deep, and the opening the windows of heaven, would accompany each other, as Moses tells us they actually did; for, according to him, both happened on the same day. The abatement of the waters would ensue on the ascent of the electric fluid to where it was before: the atmosphere would then absorb the water as formerly; that which had ascended through the earth would again subside, and thus every thing would return to its former state."

Our space will not permit us to enter more fully into the subject at present; but we shall probably take an early opportunity of recurring to it, as it is one rendered extremely interesting and important, by the discoveries of Cuvier, and other geologists of the present day.

Narrative of Discovery and Adventure in the Polar Seas and Regions: with Illustrations of their Climate, Geology, and Natural History; and an account of the Whale-Fishery. By Professor Leslie, Professor Jameson, and Hugh Murray, Esq. F. R. S. A. Edinburgh—Oliver and Boyd—1830.

Next to the inquiry respecting the original formation of our globe, there cannot be a more profitable or a more interesting occupation than an investigation of its present condition—the inhabitants by whom it is now peopled—the productions of its various climes—the manner in which the inhabitants in its various divisions are employed—the progress of civilization—and the state of trade and commerce. Nor do we know a more pleasing occupation of a winter's evening, when comfortably seated by our fire-side, than to take up a well-written volume of voyages, and thus while we hear "the pelting of the pitiless storm," unmoved by the tempest which may lash the ocean into foam, or, unchilled by the cold which may be freezing it into solid masses in the neighbourhood of the frigid zones, accompany Captain Cooke in his researches among the islands of the South Sea; or with Captains Parry and Lyon, pay a passing visit to the arctic regions, visiting by the way the dreary hut of the Esquimaux and Greenlander, and observing, as we proceed, the means used to overcome and capture the leviathan of the deep at the whale fisheries—the numerous perils and daring adventures of those employed in the arduous undertaking, as well as the more simple, though not less successful stratagems employed by the natives of

the Polar regions, to ensnare and get within their grasp the bear, the reindeer, the walrus, and the seal. A more interesting work of the nature we have alluded to, or one more calculated at once to amuse and instruct, we have never yet seen than the one now before us. It is one peculiarly well fitted for a family library, being written in that plain, easy, unaffected style, which is of all others the best fitted for the capacities of youth, as well as for engaging and fixing their attention. The design of the work, we are told, is to exhibit a connected view of the successive voyages made to the arctic regions. In performing this, however, the writers have gone into a most interesting examination of the climate and its phenomena—given a general survey of all that is known of its geological structure, and at the same time afforded some interesting particulars relative to its natural history. The following brief extract, descriptive of the aurora borealis, will afford our readers a very fair idea of the interesting manner in which this volume has been compiled.

"The northern world, when the sun departs, is by no means involved in that deep, monotonous gloom which such a privation might indicate. After that luminary has finally quitted the earth, and the long northern winter has closed in, the heavens become a gay scene, through which the most brilliant meteors are perpetually playing. Those singular and beautiful streams of light, called commonly the *Aurora Borealis*, or Northern Morning, keep up an almost incessant illumination. They were discerned in full splendour by Captains Parry and Lyon during their Arctic residence. The light had a tendency to form an irregular arch, which, in calm weather, was often very distinct, though its upper boundary was seldom well defined; but, whenever the air became agitated, showers of rays spread in every direction, with the brilliancy and rapidity of lightning. Sometimes long bands of light were spread out with inconceivable rapidity, but always appearing to move to and from a fixed point, somewhat like a ribbon held in the hand and shaken with an undulatory motion....They gave an indescribable air of magic to the whole scene, and made it not wonderful, that by the untaught Indian they should be viewed as 'the spirits of his fathers roaming through the land of souls.'....It has been a question whether this meteor hid the stars; it was generally decided that it dimmed the lustre of those heavenly bodies, as if a thin gauze veil had been drawn over them,—an effect which was augmented when several luminous portions were spread over each other. In a clear atmosphere these lights shone with a brightness which gave the impression that they were nearer than the clouds; but whenever these last overspread the sky, the *Aurora* was hid by them, and must therefore have been more distant.

"Other luminous meteors, arising apparently from the refraction caused by the minute and highly-crystalized spiculæ of ice, appear in succession to embellish the northern sky. The sun and moon are often surrounded with haloes,—concentric circles of vapour, tinted with the brightest hues of the rainbow. Parhelia, or mock suns, frequently adorned with these accompaniments, shine at once in different parts of the sky. Ellis, who was with Moore and Smith to Hudson's Bay, has seen six in one sky. They are most brilliant at daybreak, diminish in lustre as the real sun ascends, but again brighten at his setting. The sun himself, for some time before he finally departs for the winter, and also after his reappearance in the spring, tinges the sky with hues of matchless brilliancy. The edges of the clouds near that luminary often present a fiery or burnished appearance, while the opposite horizon glows with a deep purple, gradually softening as it ascends into a delicate rose-colour of inconceivable beauty. As the solar orb at these periods never rises more than a few degrees above the horison, he is, as it were, in a state of permanent rising and setting, and seems to exhibit longer and more variously the beautiful appearances arising out of that position."

Gertrude and her Family. By the Author of "A Visit to my Birth Place," "Early Recollections," "The Abbey of Innismoyle." Dublin: Tims.

Were we to judge of "the march of intellect" in Ireland, by the number of neat little works which, from month to month, issue from the press of the metropolis, we should be disposed to think rather favourably on the subject, as there can be no doubt, forming our judgment by this criterion, that the good people of this country are becoming much more fond of reading than they were but a few years since; and it is pleasing to observe, that to works in which amusement is blended with information, a decided preference is given. The little volume before us, is one of that description, in which an interesting and very natural story is made the medium of conveying particular religous opinions; and one chief object appears to be, to show the beneficial effects produced on the character by genuine religion. We are introduced to the heroine of the story, just as she is married, in her seventeenth year, to an opulent banker, whose tastes and dispositions are the very opposite of her own, but whose riches are supposed fully